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ABSTRACT

A study compared remedial readers to more proficient readers in their meaning-making processes during the reading of literary text. Subjects, six children attending a university-based literacy center, read aloud two stories and verbalized their thoughts during reading. Judith Langer's four categories (or "stances") were used to compare the resulting "think-alouds." A qualitative analysis was also conducted as other categories emerged and as all the responses were recategorized for difficulties experienced by remedial readers. Results indicated that remedial readers spent a disproportionate amount of time in the "being out and stepping into an envisionment" stance; and that these readers consistently failed to construct evolving wholes and struggled with the language of literary discourse. Findings suggest that the overall picture of remedial readers was one of being on the outside, looking in. (RS)

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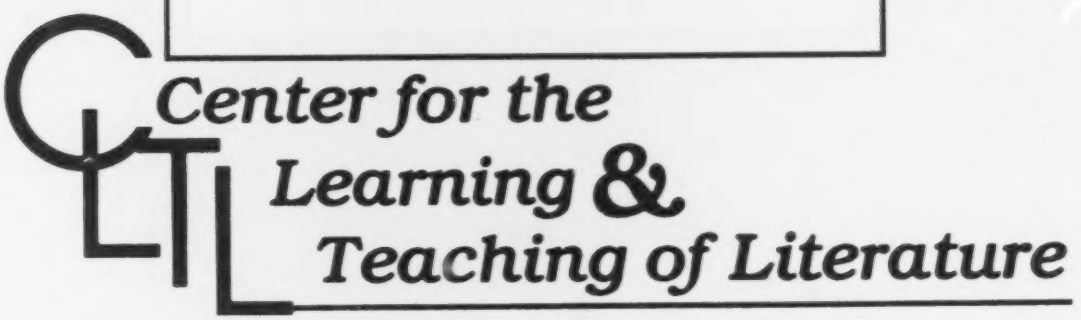
Victoria Purcell-Gates



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Abstract

This study compared remedial readers to more proficient readers (Langer, 1989) in their meaning-making processes during the reading of literary text. Six children attending a university-based Literacy Center read aloud two stories and verbalized their thoughts during reading. Langer's categories (1989) were used to compare the resulting "think-alouds." Langer found readers assume four stances as they make meaning while reading literature: (a) Being Out and Stepping Into an Envisionment; (b) Being In and Moving Through an Envisionment; (c) Stepping Back and Rethinking What One Knows; and (d) Stepping Out and Objectifying the Experience. Langer describes readers as always working toward an evolving understanding of the whole and notes that their envisionment of the whole affects their momentary understandings. A qualitative analysis was also conducted as other categories emerged and as all the responses were recategorized for difficulties experienced by remedial readers. Analysis revealed that the remedial readers spent a disproportionate amount of time in the "being out and stepping into an envisionment" stance. Also, these readers consistently failed to construct evolving wholes and struggled with the language of literary discourse. The overall picture of remedial readers gained from this study is one of being on the outside, looking in. They rarely, if ever, "evoke a poem" (Rosenblatt, 1978). Implications for and of instruction are discussed.

On the Outside Looking In: A Study of Remedial Readers' Meaning-Making While Reading Literature

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The relationship between the reader and the text during the act of reading has been the focus of a great deal of work over the last few decades. Theorists and researchers from fields ranging from literary theory to reading comprehension have attempted to describe what happens when readers enter the world of text. Although each field has perceived and approached this question somewhat differently, the resulting consensus paints a picture of a dynamic construction of meaning by the reader using the text as a guide for this interpretive process (Anderson, 1984; Fish, 1989; Iser, 1978; Langer, 1989; Rosenblatt, 1978; Rumelhart, 1977; Smith, 1985). It is generally now taken as a precept among reading theorists that comprehension relies upon the activity of the reader in the construction of a whole.

Accepting this description of reader/text relationship, we can begin to examine the ways in which children who are performing well below grade level on measures of reading achievement go about constructing meaning while reading. Fresh insights into the difficulties experienced by remedial readers are desperately needed. Years of research have yielded little information about operative factors involved in reading difficulties beyond the word identification level. Results from studies of poor readers which looked beyond this factor, however, suggest a problem in this area of reader/text relationship.

Whereas an active, interpretive orientation toward text is required for meaning construction, poor readers seem to be characterized by their passivity (Johnston, 1985; Risko & Alvarez, 1986). They do not take control of the processes necessary to make the text make sense. Poor readers seem to perceive reading as mainly a decoding process rather than one of meaning construction or comprehension (Gambrell & Heathington, 1981). This distorts the reader/text relationship by perceiving the text as the purveyor of meaning rather than as the signifier of the meaning to be constructed by the reader.

The above points suggest a promising area of research in the quest for insights into the nature of reading difficulties. If we could begin to examine in depth the ways in which poor readers construct, or fail to construct, meaning during reading, we might gain greater understanding of the factors blocking access to full literacy for a significant percentage of the population.

Langer's (1989) recent research into the nature of meaning-building processes during the reading of literary and nonliterary text provides a vehicle for such a study. Seeking to discover ways in which readers develop their understandings during the reading of literature and text material in other classes, Langer asked students in middle and high school (grades 7-12) to engage in think-alouds as they read several short stories, poems, science and social studies pieces. Langer's perspective is that reading is sense-making during which understandings develop and change as the reading progresses. These understandings involve the creation of local envisionments, "...a personal text-world embodying all she or he understands, assumes, or imagines up to that point in the reading" (p. 4-5). Since envisionments are evolving wholes which are subject to change even after the reading is finished, Langer claims that it is necessary

to examine readers' sense-making across time throughout the course of the text.

Analysis of the think-alouds in Langer's study revealed four stances the readers took as they developed their meanings across time with both literary and nonliterary texts. These stances reflect varying reader/text relationships and are recursive rather than linear. The four stances are: (a) Being Out and Stepping Into an Envisionment; (b) Being In and Moving Through an Envisionment; (c) Stepping Back and Rethinking What One Knows; and (d) Stepping Out and Objectifying the Experience.

Being out and stepping into an envisionment occurs as the reader attempts to establish initial understanding of the content, genre, characters, language, and so on. It happens at any point where unfamiliar or unexpected content is encountered. It involves asking questions, making associations, and creating a general context for understanding the reading. For example, while reading an initial description of a character, a reader may speculate, "He must be a very old man." Langer states that it is a time when readers' envisionments do not cohere because not enough text knowledge has been established from which to make predictions.

Being in and moving through an envisionment stances are seen when readers use the ongoing text to build an evolving envisionment. They elaborate and make connections among their ideas. Within this stance, a reader may (building on the previous example) express, "He's very lonely now and starting to feel depressed."

Stepping back and rethinking what one knows describes what readers do when they use their growing understandings to step outside of the envisionment to reflect upon their own lives or their own knowledge. Langer explains that in other stances, readers use their background knowledge and experiences to help them understand the text while in this stance the envisionments are used to help the reader reflect on thought, actions, or feelings outside of the text. "I never thought about old people getting depressed like this," a reader may reflect during this stance.

Stepping out and objectifying the experience occurs when readers distance themselves from their final envisionments and reflect on the reading activity, their understandings, and their reactions. They may also comment on the text and the reading experience. "This story was so intense!" a reader could conclude. Langer emphasizes throughout her analysis of the data that readers are always working toward an evolving understanding of the whole and their envisionment of the whole affects their momentary understandings.

Langer's sample for this study included students judged by their teachers as performing below, at, and above average for their grade level. The results indicated that while most of the students engaged in the full range of stances, there was some initial indication that the poorer readers often spent more time in the "being out and stepping into an envisionment" stance than did the other readers. This suggests a locus of difficulty for poor readers. A replication of part of Langer's study with students with severe reading difficulties could explore this area in greater depth. The present study undertook to do this.

The Study

This study was designed to: (a) examine identified remedial readers' meaning-making processes through the lens of Langer's description of stances taken by readers of literary text; and (b) search for factors which may be related to difficulties experienced by these readers as they attempt to construct meaning during the reading of literature.

The student-informants for the study all attended a university-based Literacy Center, a remedial clinic for children grades 1-8 where children's literature is used as the material for instruction. Six children in grades 6-8 were identified for the study. All of the children had an independent reading grade level of at least 3.0, according to the Analytical Reading Inventory, 4th Ed. (Woods & Moe, 1989). They all were performing at least two grade levels below norm, according to the Stanford Achievement Test (1987) and the Analytical Reading Inventory. Four boys and two girls comprised the sample, four of whom were black and two white. They all lived within the limits of a large midwestern city.

Materials

Langer's initial findings on the type of stances taken by poorer readers were based on data collected during the reading of material which, according to Langer, could well have been too difficult for the low readers (1989). To unconfound the factors of poor word knowledge and general proclivity toward a particular stance during reading, material was chosen for this study which was on the independent reading level of all of the students. The two short stories used for data collection were "The House on the Hill" and "The Real Princess."

"The House on the Hill" is about a teenage boy who feels unwanted and alienated. He has recently been placed in a foster home, due to the break up of his family, and has begun shoplifting and storing the items in an abandoned house. The plot relates an event in which he is nearly caught stealing and his subsequent realization that his foster parents do care for him.

"The Real Princess" is a version of Hans Christian Anderson's "The Princess and the Pea." This is the tale of the princess who proves her royalty by feeling a pea through many layers of mattresses.

Procedures

The students were introduced to the study by their individual teachers at the Center. The think-aloud procedure (Langer, 1989) was taught to them through explanation and modeling. Each student practiced the procedure with three stories written at the same readability level as the data collection stories. When each teacher felt the student was familiar and comfortable with the procedure, data were collected on the two stories.

For the think-alouds, the students were encouraged to verbalize their thoughts when they felt comfortable rather than at prearranged text breaks to minimize the disruptive effect of the think-aloud procedure on the development of meaning. However, if the teacher felt a student was going for too long without offering a think-aloud, a tap on the shoulder (teachers sat slightly behind each student to minimize distraction) was used to remind the student about

the procedure. Only one story was read per session to avoid fatigue. All of the data collection sessions were audiotaped for later analysis.

Analysis

Analysis was partly descriptive in that Langer's categories were used initially to categorize as many of the think-aloud responses as possible. The unit of analysis was each response. A 'response' is defined as each time a reader stopped reading to offer a single, unitary thought. Each response was bounded by text, i.e., no pause in reading for reader comment contained more than one topic of response. A more qualitative analysis also resulted as: (a) other categories of response emerged; and (b) responses viewed through the "stance" lens were reviewed and categorized for qualities of the responses which seemed to offer insights into difficulties experienced by remedial readers.

Responses were assigned to one of Langer's categories through the following procedure: (a) each transcript was read with Langer's definitions and examples of each stance in mind; (b) each response was examined for the reader's concern at the time (e.g., did the response indicate a concern with establishing an envisionment or with developing an already established envisionment?); (c) if the response reflected one of Langer's stances, it was thus labeled. Responses which did not fit one of Langer's stances were examined again for other patterns of response. One other pattern was identified. All responses were reexamined to verify categories. This recursive procedure continued until the researcher was convinced as to the uniqueness of each classification. Responses not falling into a pattern were withheld from further analysis (this amounted to seven out of 270 responses). These responses were either off-task comments or ones which made no sense to the researcher.

Percentages were calculated by dividing the total number of responses in a category by the total number of all responses assigned to categories.

Reliability of category assignment was assessed by having a trained graduate student mark six randomly selected transcripts (three for each story). The Pearson product moment correlation between the first and second category assignment was $r = .87$.

The results are based on analysis of 263 think-aloud responses garnered from six students reading two short stories.

Results

Analysis revealed that many of the think-aloud responses reflected Langer's stances, with the majority falling into the "being out and stepping into an envisionment" stance. Another pattern of response emerged, however, which was not reported by Langer. This type of response reflected a passive, reiterative orientation toward the text and was exemplified by a repeating or restating of the text.

A qualitative analysis of the content of the responses revealed difficulties for these readers on two levels: (a) failure to construct wholes; and (b) struggle with the language of literary discourse.

Stances

Figure 1 illustrates the pattern of response by the remedial readers in this study. Langer's initial indicator of poor readers spending more time trying to get into envisionments was reinforced by the results of the present study. Forty-eight percent of the responses were of the "being out and stepping into an envisionment" stance. Examples of this stance follow, showing readers' attempts to make initial acquaintance with the piece. They are from the readings of "The House on the Hill" (student comments are underlined while the text remains unmarked):

> He could see his high school near his old home. He started to think of the days when he lived with his parents.
>
> So he don't live with his parents anymore and he don't care about them.
>
> From its window, Mark could see down to the town. The room seemed far away from everything. Nobody could reach him here.
>
> Maybe it was a mansion.

In addition, 13 percent of the total number of responses were of the "repeating/restating text" type which can be interpreted as a being out and failing to step into an envisionment. These responses took the form of either a verbatim rendering of text language just read or a mere restatement of the just-read text. All of the readers produced this type of response. Examples of this follow from the story "The House on the Hill":

> He was like the house on the hill.
>
> He was like the house on the hill.
>
> He walked through the dusty halls, up the dirty stairs, and into the front room.
>
> So he walked ... he go up there ... to the front room.
>
> It was Sam, looking like he didn't know just what to say. He put his hands in his pockets, and stood there for a second, trying to say something.
>
> Sam didn't know what to say.

Thus, compared to Langer's total sample, these readers spent much more time being out of an envisionment.

Thirty-six percent of the responses, however, did reflect the "being in and moving through an envisionment" stance. In this stance, readers further their construction of an already established envisionment. Elaborations and a sense of connection to other ideas distinguish this stance from the "being out and stepping in" stance. Examples of these responses for "House on the Hill" follow:

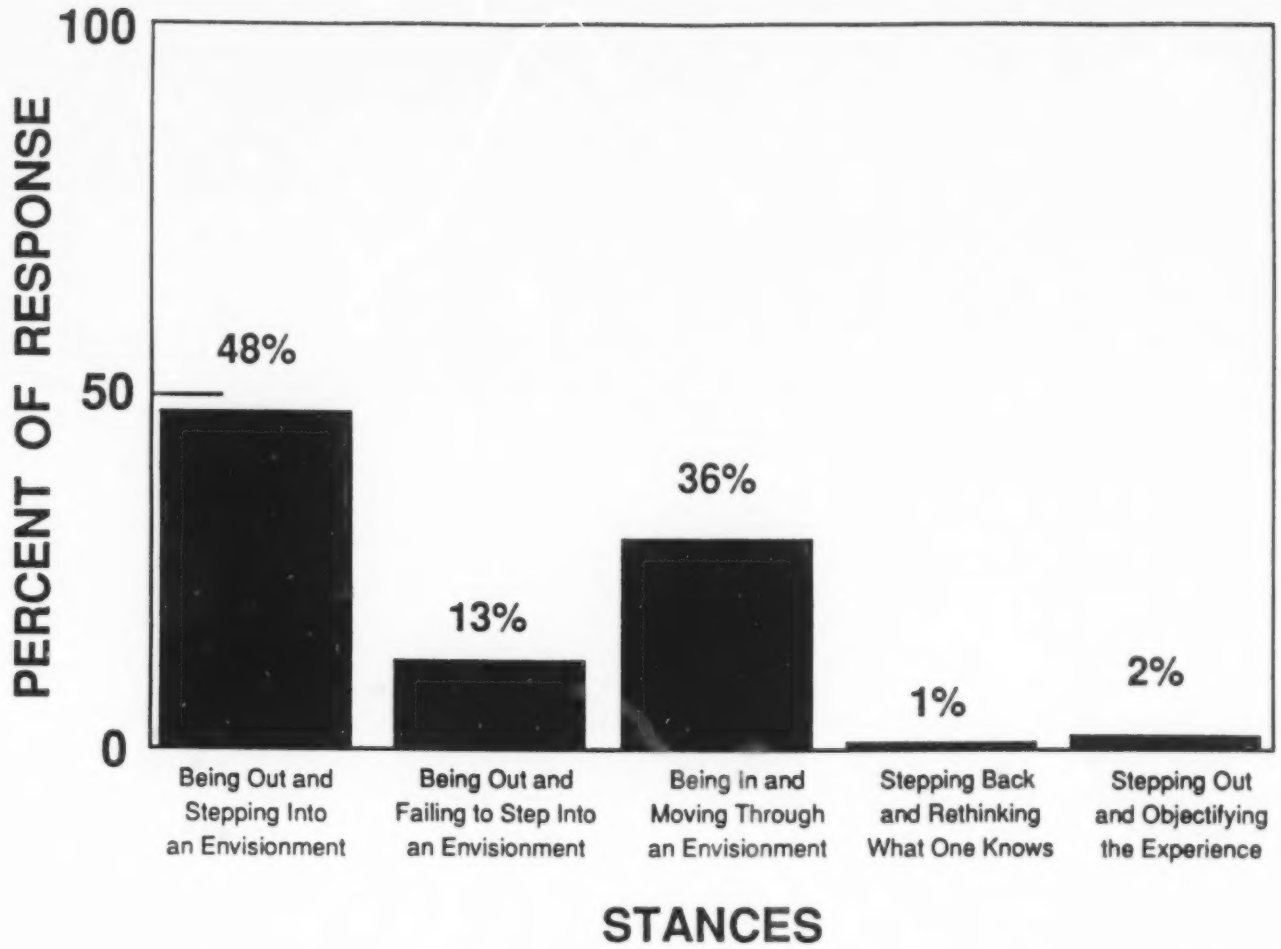

Figure 1. Percentage of responses which fell into the five categories of stances taken by remedial readers as they constructed meaning during the reading of literature.

He must have taken it just for kicks. But he sure didn't look like he was getting any kicks now.

He was very ... I mean he looked sad 'cause he got busted.

Mark felt sick, and his knees were shaky. The lunch box was suddenly very heavy. He found himself moving back to the camera counter.

He was so scared he was gonna put it back.

Mark wanted to run, but his feet wouldn't move. They were frozen to the floor. "This will give you a record, you know," the voice continued. Mark turned around slowly, but there was no one behind him.

It was his conscience.

These readers revealed very few attempts to connect the text world to their own. Only a few of the total think-alouds revealed a stepping back or out of an envisionment by these readers. One percent of the total responses resembled Langer's "stepping back and rethinking what one knows" stance. Although there was no evidence of "rethinking" in these responses, they did reveal a "stepping back" from the text stance. A more accurate term for this stance would probably be "stepping back and connecting to one's own world." Examples from "The Real Princess" follow:

One night there was a storm. And what a storm! Thunder rolled. Lightning flashed. And the rain came down as if it would never stop.

That's the way it was all this weekend.

Lightning flashed. And the rain came down as if it would never stop. It was a frightful night.

It's not that frightening. Lightning's just not that frightening.

Two percent of the responses reflected the "stepping out and objectifying the experience" stance. Most of these occurred after the readings of "The Real Princess," the text of which ended with the question, "That's some story, isn't it?" which, thus, invited readers to assume this type of stance. Examples follow:

(From "The House on the Hill") Sam was all right. He would probably understand things. Maybe, with Sam around to help, Mark would make it, too.

Good. Wheee. Good story; good story; good story.

"That's some story, isn't it?"

Yeah. That's a pretty good story.

Failure to Create Wholes

The readers in this study consistently revealed a strong tendency to create meaning on local event-levels rather than working from an understanding of the whole. In this way, they differed markedly from Langer's more general sample. Langer concluded that readers in her study "took each idea they read and tried to understand it in terms of their sense of the whole, rather than as a stepping stone along the way. They clarified ideas as they read and related them to the growing and changing horizon -- that horizon modified the parts and the parts modified the horizon" (p. 16).

Langer's portrait of the meaning construction process implies a proactive stance by readers. The think-alouds produced by the problem readers in this study reflected more of a reactive approach to the reading of literature. These readers did not take charge of the reading experience, creating wholes and establishing varying relationships to the text as they developed their meanings across time. Rather, they seemed to engage in reactions to the text on the local level with little attempt to tie what they were reading to their own experiences or to reflect upon what they had read. They were so tied to the text that they spent an unexpected amount of time merely restating or repeating the text language they had just read.

The relative amount of time they spent in the "being out and stepping into an envisionment" stance (51 percent of responses) is a clear indicator of this tendency to create meaning on the local level rather than work with an evolving concept of the whole. Following is an excerpt from Melissa's transcript which provides a compelling example of this. This example comes from "The House on the Hill" and occurs near the end of the story. At this point, Mark has survived nearly being caught stealing, decided not to steal again, and is establishing a relationship with his foster father, Sam. They are out for a walk and notice that the abandoned house has been purchased:

> "Well," said Sam, "someone finally bought this place. It's a good place." "You like it, too?" Mark asked. "I always have," Sam answered. "It just never had the right owners."
>
> Maybe he wants to move in it also.
>
> Sam walked on slowly.
>
> Probably so they could get closer and closer.
>
> Mark stood there and thought of the things in the closet.
>
> Probably there were ghosts.
>
> The new owners would think the last people had left them.
>
> Probably was his parents.
>
> The things weren't his any longer.
>
> Probably those who moved into that house.

He smiled. They never had been his. Mark looked again at the house, shining with its new coat of paint.

Maybe somebody owns that paint.

Someone had seen through the weeks and the dust.

Maybe somebody was cleaning up the place.

Someone had seen that a really nice house was under it all.

Maybe there were some ghosts.

"You made it, house on the hill," Mark said softly. Then he ran to catch up with Sam. "Wait a minute, Sam!" he called. Sam was all right.

Maybe he had been sick.

He would understand things.

One has the sense, reading this, that Melissa has read this story up to this point with no concept of the whole. Although she has already read that Mark stored his stolen items in the closet, she thinks of ghosts at this mention of items in the closet. Two lines later, she considers the possibility that the items in the closet (ghosts?) may belong to the new owners of the house. Her think-aloud comments reveal almost stream-of-consciousness reactions to the preceding text, event-by-event, with no attempt to make sense of the text in relation to a meaningful whole. While it is possible that the think-aloud procedure encouraged this, the readers in Langer's study, working with the same procedure, did not respond in the same way.

Struggle With Literary Language

Perhaps related to this disabling strategy were the readers' struggles with the less-than-completely-explicit language of the literary text. Thirty-four percent of the think-alouds revealed a focus on the meaning of the words or language just read. This struggle took several forms.

First, all of the readers exhibited problems with assigning appropriate meanings to the figurative language in the text. Figures of speech were often interpreted in ways which did not make sense in the context of the story being read. For example, Melissa responds in the following manner during her reading of "The House on the Hill":

"All right, kid, let's see what you have," said a loud voice behind Mark. "Come on, hand it over." Mark wanted to run, but his feet wouldn't move. They were frozen to the floor.

Probably there was ice on the floor.

Readers had similar problems with words with multiple meanings, often assuming an inappropriate one. An example from Alan's reading of "The House on the Hill" follows:

> Mark wanted to run, but his feet wouldn't move. They were frozen to the floor. "This will give you a record, you know," the voice continued.
>
> Probably a music record.

The readers in this study also revealed a need to translate the language of the text into more explicit language through their think-alouds. This often took the form of filling in elliptic information at the text level:

> Mark left the window and went to the small hall closet.
>
> To put his clothes in there.
>
> He kept thinking about being caught.
>
> By some police.
>
> (from "The Royal Princess") What did they do with the pea? Oh, they put it in a glass box, and they put the box in a museum where everyone could see it.
>
> For whoever came first.

This type of response was characterized as filling in at the text level because of the "reading intonation" nature of the think-alouds. If one were only listening to the taped readings, it would be easy to assume that the responses underlined above were actually part of the text being read. This quality of the intonation distinguished these responses from others.

The explicit stating of pronominal referents was also an indicator of this need to make the language explicit:

> The old king himself went out to open it.
>
> The king went to open it, the door. His door.
>
> He even had dreams about it.
>
> Probably about the policeman.

Many of the think-alouds revealed the readers' struggles with inferred information. They would often state the inference explicitly as if explaining to themselves:

> As they ate they asked him about school. He answered their questions by saying just "yes" or "no." He was too busy thinking to talk to them.
>
> So he like ... so they asked what he did at school but he didn't go to school, he was at the old house.

> Mark looked again at the house, shining with its new coat of paint. Someone had seen through the weeds and the dust. Someone had seen that a really nice house was under it all.
>
> So somebody wanted that house badly and they bought it.

At times, their incorrect inferences or their questions would reveal confusion:

> "Well," said Sam, "someone finally bought this place. It's a good place." "You like it, too?" Mark asked. "I always have," Sam answered. "It just never had the right owners."
>
> Sam bought the house.
>
> (from The Real Princess") What in the world was in that bed? It was so hard that I am black and blue all over.
>
> I don't know how she got all black and blue.

Finally, the tendency of these readers to simply repeat or restate text was also taken as evidence of a struggle with the language of the text. Their behavior of repeating the language verbatim and/or restating it appeared to function as translations into more familiar, thus more comprehensible, language or to repeat it in such a way as to "try again" for the meaning. This behavior was pervasive throughout the data. It is possible that the nature of the "think aloud" procedure may have contributed to this repeating/restating behavior, i.e., the readers may have responded to the requirement to say something by simply repeating the text, especially when reminded to respond with a tap on the shoulder. This argument weakens, however, with a review of the data which reveals that 81 percent of the repeating/restating responses were the result of spontaneous comments rather than of reminders.

Discussion

This study compared remedial readers (grades 6-8) to Langer's more proficient readers (grades 7-12) in their meaning-making processes during the reading of literary texts. It also provided insights into some of the problems experienced by problem readers as they read literature. The overall picture of remedial readers gained from this study is one of being on the outside and looking in. They rarely, if ever, "evoke a poem" in the words of Rosenblatt (1978). They find it difficult to move into an envisionment, and when they do, they elaborate upon it only momentarily before they again find themselves outside trying to get in. Langer reports similar patterns for the poor readers in her study. These readers did move into envisionments, she relates, but seemed unable to maintain them (J.A. Langer, personal communication, November 1989). The results of this study suggest that problems with the text may be related to the reported appearance of an overall passive, reactive posture assumed by the remedial reader. These problems are not at the word identification level, but rather lie within the reader/text relationship.

Text plays an essential semiotic function in meaning construction during reading. It serves to provide guideposts and clues to the reader who must create the envisionment (Iser,

1978; Rosenblatt, 1978). Rosenblatt assigns two major functions to the text: (a) it serves as a stimulus activating elements of the reader's past experience with both literature and life; and (b) it serves as a blueprint, "a guide for the selecting, rejecting, and ordering of what is being called forth; the text regulates what shall be held in the forefront of the reader's attention" (p. 11). The ordering of signs, or the blueprint, provided by the literary texts in this study did not serve this function for these remedial readers. Rather, their struggles with the language -- "the unique pattern of words which constitutes the text" (Rosenblatt, p. 11) -- revealed more of a gatekeeping role for the text, keeping these readers out of a created literary experience.

It may be that the passive posture toward text reported of remedial readers may not only reflect a behavioral factor but may also be an artifact of this difficulty with the semiotics of the text. This is suggested by the fact that the readers in this study and in Langer's did at times attempt to maintain envisionments. Their continued failure to do so may be indicative of years of such failure which would account for the behavioral aspect of passivity reported by others. In other words, poor readers may have experienced difficulty with moving in and out of text through the creation of wholes and local envisionments from the beginning and, in essence, "given up" and assumed a passive posture toward meaning-making while reading.

In a very real sense, the responses of the remedial readers reflected more of an "efferent" approach than the "aesthetic" which is integral to literary reading (Rosenblatt, 1978). Rosenblatt defines efferent reading as reading in which the reader concentrates on what the symbols (the text) designate, the information he/she will take away from the reading, rather than on the actual experience the reader is living through during the reading event (the aesthetic approach). The focus on the literal meaning of the text by the readers in this study, taken to the extreme of simple repetition or restatement, reflected a concern with efferent reading of literary text, almost as if they were answering anticipated questions of the "what happened in the story" type. (Langer [1989] describes a similar distinction contrasting readers different orientations to literary and nonliterary readings. In this system, it can be considered that the poor readers read a literary text in a nonliterary manner.)

This has very real implications for instruction and of instruction. Several theorists who have examined the teaching of reading and of literature have noted that most instruction directs readers toward an efferent stance toward literary text (Rosenblatt, 1978; Langer, 1989). In addition, lower-ability readers experience more literal-level instruction than average readers. It is quite probable that readers experiencing difficulty have never been able to go beyond this focus on surface-level features of text and comprehension. Thus they focus on the literal reading of the text at the expense of overall meaning-construction. To do this, they must assign a skewed weight to the text in the reader/text relationship.

Instruction for remedial readers which is process-based and which focuses on facilitating the active meaning-construction basic to the reading process may very well lead to advances in our success rate with remedial readers. Surely, the results of this study imply that remedial instruction must look beyond word-level difficulties to the very nature of the reader/text relationship. Research on such instruction would contribute greatly to our knowledge in this domain.

Research into the problems of remedial readers with text must accompany instructional change. We need to look more deeply into the nature and the etiology of the linguistic difficulties with text experienced by the readers in this study. This research may go in several

directions: (a) generic language problems which span different linguistic contexts; and (b) language difficulties specific to literary texts.

Research is also needed to compare remedial reader's meaning-construction processes during non-literary reading to those documented in this study during literary reading. And finally, the contribution of choice and ownership over reading material to meaning-construction processes must be examined before we complete this picture of the reader/text relationship for problem readers.

Several limitations to the results of this study also suggest further research. One is the age difference of the subjects between the sample for this study and Langer's sample, to which they were being compared. Although an age overlap exists (grades 7 and 8) between the two samples, the average ages of the subjects differ, with Langer's average age being two and a half years older. This may well contribute to the student's ability to better create evolving wholes as they make meaning while reading literary selections. The factors of skill level and age need to be unconfounded in further research. Also, the relationship between general cognitive development and strategies of meaning-making during reading is yet to be examined through studies of children of all ages reading literature.

Another limitation to this study is the small sample size, dictated in this case by available remedial students accustomed to reading literature. As literature-based reading instruction expands in the schools, further research can investigate the findings of this study with larger samples.

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